garnishee orders to attack bank accounts, debts etc., drawing up of tax recovery statements by Tax Recovery Officers enabling them to effect recovery by attachment/sale of assets, appointment of receiver for managing defaulter's property, arrest of defaulters, etc., in appropriate cases. Administratively, Action Plan targets have been fixed for reduction of outstanding demands and the progress of recovery is monitored at various levels. In all these cases, the Assessing Officers are required to send cassier reports indicating the progress in the recovery of taxes and these reports are reviewed at the level of Commissioner of Income-tax and above. Since a large part of the demand is disputed in appeals etc. steps have also been taken for expeditious disposal of appeals.

Outstanding Excise Duty

2712. SHRI DHULESHWAR MEENA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to State;

(a) what are the names of the firms, companies and corporate bodies against whom Central Excise Duty amounting to Rs. 50 lakhs and above as on 1st December, 1991 is outstanding, as per latest information available with his Ministry;

(b) what effective steps have been taken to recover the same; and

(c) what further steps have been or are being taken to recover the Central Excise Duty earlier waived leading to unjust enrichment from the Companies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RAMESHWAR THAKUR): (a) A statement is enclosed. [*See* Appendix CLXI, Annexure No. 64]

(b) Administrative, legal and other measures, as are considered necessary to recover the amounts outstanding, continue to be taken. In important cases involving high revenue stakes, Special Counsels have been engaged to defend the Government's stand. Courts are regularly moved for expeditious hearing and vacation of stays.

(c) The Central Excise & Customs Laws (Amendment) Act 1991 (40 of 91) which, *inter alia*, bars refund to assessees of excise duty leading to unjust enrichment, as recommended by the Public Accounts Committee in their 22nd Report (1990-91), has come into force with effect from 20th September, 1991. Therefore the question of recovering the refunds already granted does not arise.

Rise in prices of Gold and Silver

2713. SHRI DHULESHWAR MEENA:
SHRI RAGHAVJI:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Gold and Silver hit new peeks early this month;

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor;

(c) what steps Government propose to take to ensure that black money is not invested in these precious metals; and

(d) whether it is possible to hold the unprecedented climb up particularly of gold and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RAMESHWAR THAKUR): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The prices of gold and silver have shown a rise in 1991 over that in 1990. The prices of these metals in India are largely influenced by the prices of these commodities in the international market.

(c) and (d) Gold and silver are not essential commodities and the Government does not propose to control their prices. Various measures such as, administrative, legal and fiscal are taken by the Government from time to time to control the generation of black money.